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BRIEFER PAPERS READ IN CONFERENCES

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 - B. The International Character of Commercial History. By ABBOTT P. USHER
 - C. Some New Manuscript Sources for the Study of Modern Commerce. By N. S. B. GRAS
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IX. BRIEFER PAPERS READ IN CONFERENCES.

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A. LIBYA AS A FIELD OF RESEARCH.

Read in the Conference on Ancient History, by ORIC BATES.

There is one region which, although partially within the Minoan sphere, has been curiously neglected by students of the earliest Mediterranean cultures: the North African littoral zone. After four years of specialization in the history and ethno-geography of North Africa, I am convinced that before we can attain to a just understanding of Mediterranean origins, we must pay far more attention than hitherto to the Libyan field.

In the first place, Sergi's contention that, at a very remote period, there existed on both sides of the Mediterranean a homogeneous Afro-European or "Eurafrican" race is now supported by evidence much more serious than that which Sergi himself brought to bear upon the question. By the labors of other anthropologists the main features of his hypothesis have become established facts. This being so, the study of ancient Libya is profoundly important if we are to arrive at any accurate knowledge of the various ethnical elements which constituted the Minoan peoples and the Greeks and Romans of full classical times. In studying the ethnology of ancient Libya we are studying the ethnology of the basic element in Greece and Italy, and in the Iberian peninsula as well.

Again, a very complex problem, which needs to be approached from the Libyan side, confronts the student of Semitic origins. Is there real justification for the recently arisen fashion of speaking of the Berber languages as "proto-Semitic"? The question can be answered only when modern philology has got to the bottom of the mysterious relationship observable between the Semitic languages on the one hand and the numerous neo-Libyan dialects on the other. When this problem is cleared up, we shall have a fact, or a set of facts, of the utmost importance to the Semitic scholar, the Egyptologist, and the student of Mediterranean pre-history.

In regard to Libyan philology, two other points may be mentioned: First, that the Berlin school recognizes that the Libyan contribution to ancient Egyptian language is an important one, while Maspero and his adherents tend to regard it as fundamental. Yet little modern work has been done under this head. The late Marquis de Roche-monteix instituted a comparison between Berber and Egyptian

syntax, and I have myself endeavored to do the same for the vocabularies; but neither the labors of Rochemonteix nor my own attempts can be taken as more than initial steps in a field in which the philologist, especially equipped, and equally familiar with the work of Basset, Motylinski, Masqueray, and others, in Berber studies, and with that of Erman, Sethe, and Steindorff in Egyptian, could not fail to secure very valuable results. Secondly, despite de Vaux's new presentation of the Ugro-Altaiic theory for the origin of Etruscan, here again we are in need of expert philological opinion to confute or to support the hypothesis of Brinton and Sergi, who looked for the solution of this *quæstio vexata* by means of Berber philology.

To turn to questions more strictly historical, I would enumerate the following as typical problems demanding the serious attention of students of ancient history:

1. The connection between Libya and Syria calls for further investigation than it has yet received from W. M. Müller or from anyone else. Thus, it appears that the Hittites connived at one of the great Libyan invasions of the Nile Valley in the time of the Twentieth Dynasty, and everyone is familiar with the notices of Lubim or Lehabim mercenaries in the Old Testament. In the Libyan spoil lists are enumerated objects which are almost certainly derived from Syria, as well as others obtained from northern sources; and in an Egyptian relief showing the Egyptian assault on the Asiatic fortress of Satuna the garrison is represented as half Syrian and half Libyan. With what part of Libya did the Syrian Semites of New Empire times have relations? Was there a sea traffic between the two regions? Is Daressy right in asserting that already the Semites had established factories and even colonies in North Africa? These are but some of the questions suggested by the known facts.

2. In the case of the great Greek colony of Cyrene, the leading problem may be said to be the relationship existing between the colonists and the natives. It has been suspected that the historic alternation in the monarchical epoch of the names Battos and Arkesilaos might point to the early existence of some sort of dual control in which Greeks and Libyans shared. I do not at present hold this view, but I am convinced that without an acquaintance with the temper and usages of the Libyan inhabitants of Cyrenaica, the internal history of Greek Africa is a sealed book. The very names of most of the towns and hamlets in Cyrenaica—Sozusa, Taucheira, Darnis, Barkê, etc.—are old Berber, as is also—despite Studniczka's elaborate relation of the name *Κυρήνη* to a Greek radical KYP with the sense of *dominor*—the name of the metropolis itself. For the name is most easily explained as a Hellenized form of the proto-Berber *ثبير* *pl.* *يڨيرن* *Gyr, Igyren* or *ثبير* *pl.* *يفيرن* *Kyr, Ikyren* with the sense of *fontes* or *aquarum caput*, a very probable designation

because of the copious water-supply of the site (cf. modern *شربة* for the value of the first radical; and the Arab *عين شوب* as a designation for the site of Cyrene in which the locality is known because of its wonderful "Fountain of Apollo"). Under these circumstances it is merely absurd to attempt the mastery of this field without a scientific knowledge of the native population which the Greeks dispossessed of its heritage.

3. What has just been said applies with even greater force to the case of Carthage, on account of the vigor of her colonizing activities, her extensive use of mercenaries, the freedom with which her colonists intermarried with the natives, her trade with Libya Interior and along the coast, and to that strange racial sympathy which Duveyrier, Barth, Slouschz, and others have noted as existing between the Berbers and the Semites. Some features in Carthaginian sociology, which were long considered very obscure, have received explanation at the hands of modern students of Berber institutions. The *šoffetim* or *suffetes*, for example, have their modern parallels among the Berbers, and several fundamental features in modern tribal governments recall similar ones at Carthage. Here again, therefore, the student who sets himself to disentangle the Semitic from the Libyan elements in Carthaginian history will hardly fail to meet with a rich reward.

4. Every item which, either by a critical study of the ancient texts and monuments (Egyptian or classical), or by the comparative study of modern survivals, one is able to glean with regard to the pre-Islamic cultus, illuminates some point in Egyptian, Cyrenaic, or Carthaginian religion. The excellent work in this particular field of Toutain, Doutté, and other students in the brilliant new school of French scholarship, has set a high standard for these researches, but has not exhausted the field. Thus, the nature of the god "Amon" anciently venerated at Siwah has become clear to us only recently, and until last year the affinity between the bull-god Gurzil of Corippus and Mnevis of Heliopolis and similar conceptions, had not been pointed out. Many such elucidations remain to be made, not only with regard to the pagan divinities, but with regard to the saints of Northern Africa as well. In the field of African hagiography, for example, the work of Ewald Fall and Karl Maria Kaufmann at the desert sanctuary of St. Menas can not be called finished until critical study has determined how much that saint's popularity was due to the incorporation in his legendary acts of those pagan Libyan elements which survive in Berber Moslem stories of great local *sheikhs*.

The above are some of the topics for research offered by Hamitic North Africa. From the outset, as the subject has been so neglected, I may have suggested the objection that the field offers more in the way of problems than it does of sources of information which might

solve them. This is not so great a difficulty as to deprive the serious student of a reasonable hope of reward.

In the first place, a study of modern Berber dialects, which number over forty, will some day serve for a work on Libyan antiquity erected on lines similar to those of Schrader's *Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte der Arier*, and I am of those who dare to hope that something of value will eventually be wrung even from the so-called "Numidian" inscriptions.

In the second place, the prosecution of Libyan archeology on lines more scientific than any which have yet been followed is sure to abolish the current indifference among students of the Minoan civilization toward North Africa. Eastern Libya, at least, lay well inside the Minoan sphere. The fertile Cyrenaica is situated under Crete, at only a short distance from that island; the Greek sponge fisher, bound for Tripoli or Alexandria, still makes his first landfall in Cyrenaica, then turning westward or to the east. Among the Cretan hieroglyphs which Evans has collected he has, in his *Scripta Minoa*, signalized one which is identical with the African silphium-plant as conventionalized later on Cyrenaic coins. On the two occasions when I have been in Cyrenaica I have seen Minoan objects reported—in one case on authority certainly good—to have been found on the spot. The great rock-cut forts of the interior of the Sanjak of Barkah strongly recall similar structures in early Greece. These are some of the reasons for believing that the prospects for well-conducted excavation in Tripolitana or the Marmaric littoral will result in finds which will add greatly to our knowledge of the early Aegean world.

In the third place, in the matter of textual evidence the classical notices and those of the Byzantine writers are not so easily exhausted as would at first be supposed. African hagiography and patristic literature have, doubtless, still much to yield. New epigraphical material bearing on the Libyan question will soon begin to come in from Tripolitana and Marocco, while any day may see the recovery in Egypt of new documentary evidence. The Arabic sources, finally, demand a thorough ransacking, and an attempt should be made to trace the facts embodied in the later Arabic historians and geographers to their sources.

In conclusion, I would recall that one of the figures prominent in Berber studies shortly after their inception was an American, the consul Hodgson, whose name is still generously remembered in France and Algeria. It is to be hoped that, when the European reconquest of Marocco and Tripolitana are accomplished facts, and when these new fields of North African research are thrown open to investigation, American scholars will not be wholly insensible to the stimulus to Libyan studies which will result.

B. THE INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER OF COMMERCIAL HISTORY.

Read in the Conference on Modern History, by ABBOTT P. USHER, of Cornell University.

I should like to add a few words to Prof. Gay's remarks upon the international character of many of the larger problems of commercial history. We all recognize the simple literary virtue of unity when it is presented to us as a matter of abstract principle, but as usual the actual practice of the virtue is not easy. It is not always clear just what unity must be recognized. In much historical work, national boundaries set off the limits of the subject, and not infrequently some deposit of manuscript material will be so intimately connected with the subject that the most natural limits will be imposed and defined by the material available in that repository. In commercial history the relation of the subject matter to the source material is different. The subject is at times essentially international, although the source material is always affected by political boundaries and the character of the political organization of the various regions involved. It is in such cases that the practice of the most elementary virtue of literary composition becomes so difficult. It is hard to follow the subject wherever it goes, and to avoid the temptation of writing up particular masses of material rather than writing upon the subject.

Two illustrations of this difficulty come to mind: Prof. Gustav Schmoller's study of the Prussian grain trade in the "Acta Borussica," and the problems involved in the history of the bill of exchange. In both of these instances the subject is distinctly international, but in each case attempts have been made to approach the problem from a national point of view.

The official character of the great series of "Acta Borussica" naturally confined Prof. Schmoller to the limitations of a Prussian point of view, but in the study of the grain trade the limitation was singularly unfortunate. The Prussian State before and during the reign of Frederick the Great was in the peculiar position of having the most important grain-producing districts of northern Germany just outside its borders. Mecklenburg on the north and the cereal districts of Poland to the east were the most considerable sources of supply. The Magdeburg district alone was within the boundaries of the Kingdom. Under these circumstances, the controlling facts

of grain-trade policy lay in the relation of these outlying sources of supply to the needs of Prussia, and in the interference of Prussian policy with the trade between Poland and the Baltic ports. Furthermore, the partitions of Poland exerted a profound influence upon the whole commercial situation by altering the relation of some of these cereal districts to political boundaries. The subject is thus decisively international and the essential unity is that of the whole commercial movement.

The history of the bill of exchange presents a similar difficulty. It can not be written from the archives of any single country. One can not limit researches to the repositories of Italy as Goldschmidt has done, nor confine one's attention to a single fair system like Des Marez with reference to the credit instruments of the Flemish fairs. The study must pass in review the various forms of credit instruments in all the important financial centers of the different periods. The bill must be followed from Italy northward. Parts of the legal history of the instrument will be written from Italian and French archives. Much of the history of the rise of regular dealing in bills will be written from French, Flemish, and English archives. In such a subject national boundaries count for little and unless the cosmopolitan character of the problem is frankly recognized nothing of permanent value will be accomplished. Research under these conditions is difficult but the rewards are correspondingly great, for few subjects will throw so much light upon the history of modern commerce.

C. SOME NEW MANUSCRIPT SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF MODERN COMMERCE.

Read in the Conference on Modern History by N. S. B. GRAS, of Clark College.

Two points in Prof. Gay's paper appeal to me as of prime importance—commercial stages and new sources, the former being the fundamental need in the history of commerce and the latter holding out some prospect that the need may be met. Probably few have been satisfied with the stages of Schmoller and Bücher, which are so largely political in character. Most would perhaps accept the two first stages, village and town economy, as distinct in commercial history. But what comes next? Is it territorial or national economy? I prefer to hold that it is neither the one nor the other but metropolitan economy. Just what national economy is in the history of commerce I have no clear conception apart from political organization. National economy seems to be, as far as trade goes, a matter of potentiality rather than of reality.

What I have to add to the discussion to-day chiefly concerns the subject of the new sources which may be utilized by him whose ambition it is to reap a harvest in the fields of the history of trade and commerce, and I may add, by him who has the courage to enter and the pertinacity to continue the work.

The particular sources in question are the English customs records which contain detailed information for the study of modern trade. In general there are five groups of such sources, corresponding to the following five periods:

- 1066–1204, only a few documents remain;
- 1204–1275, only summary accounts are extant;
- 1275–1565, a splendid set of detailed accounts;
- 1565–1800, the Port Books;
- 1800–present, practically only summaries.

It is chiefly to the newly discovered, or the rediscovered, documents of the period 1565–1800 that I wish to call attention. Though mentioned in early official reports, and though long known to a few Record Office officials, they were made available only last winter. Their present accessibility we owe very largely to the zeal of Mr. Hubert Hall.

In point of bulk the Port Books are to be reckoned only in cartloads, and in point of numbers only in thousands, probably 25. They are all in book form but vary much in size, from the blank volume of a petty outpost to the ponderous tome of the metropolis with its 500 odd skins. On the whole, this series, in spite of many vicissitudes of fortune and change of residence, is in a good state of preservation, though often so closely written as to make reading tedious. Probably, however, the student would be more repelled by mere bulk. That this is unfortunate will, I think, appear from an account of the kind of information locked up in their uninviting covers.

Since only formal differences divide the series of Port Books from the earlier series of Customs Accounts above mentioned, what is said of the former will equally apply to the latter. In each entry are found the following matters:

- Date of month and the year;
- Name of the ship and at times its tonnage;
- Name of the master and shippers;
- Destination in case of export and place of shipment in case of import;
- Amount and kind of goods, and sometimes the value;
- Customs and subsidies paid.

Thus not only is the student furnished with plenteous material but he is given very precise information upon subjects of great moment. This makes possible a statistical analysis of English trade which is apparently unique. Just as in the earlier Customs Accounts we find considerable information about the dealings of the Staplers, so in the Port Books we are supplied with sources for the study of the joint stock companies hitherto unused. Just as in the earlier series we are able to trace the incoming of new luxuries, so in the latter we can follow the increase in the exportation of home-made articles of ever increasing fineness and value. In the former documents we see as early as the fifteenth century, the exportation of the products of a nascent domestic system, such as coverlets, caps, shoes, and iron-wares (otherwise unknown to us), and in the latter the exportation of the products of the later stages of the same domestic system. But of greater importance still, we are furnished with materials of service in any effort to solve what Prof. Gay has said to be of great importance, the development of the middleman and the widening of the market.

But for the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries there is a further source as yet unknown and inaccessible to the student of English commerce. I refer to what may loosely be called Coast Bonds. Destruction of these documents, which are to be numbered only in the hundreds of thousands, has been contemplated, but it is to be hoped that this will not be carried out.

These Coast Bonds are small slips of parchment recording coast shipments, and valuable for the history of the development of local industries as well as for the indication they give of the decrease or increase in the trade of specific ports and districts; but most of all will they be of service to the investigator of the development of the domestic market.

In conclusion I have but three remarks to make. The subject of prime importance which needs investigation is the evolution of commercial stages. Material of great value in this connection is to be found in the above-mentioned sources for the period 1275-1800. And lastly, it would be of inestimable service if some one would list and characterize the manuscripts dealing with trade to be found in the various European, and especially the English, archives.

D. THE STUDY OF SOUTH AMERICAN COMMERCIAL HISTORY.

Remarks in the Conference on Modern History, by CHARLES LYON CHANDLER,
Department of State.

There are few fields of historical study more neglected to-day than the commercial history of South America. There are few arms of the great sea of historical investigation which have been so unexplored; almost no part of it has been the subject of critical historical research by our scholars. I will confine myself to merely indicating a few of the more important topics that could be worked up into useful theses.

Why, for instance, should Lima have 87,000 people and Buenos Aires 46,000 in 1810, while a hundred years later the Argentine capital had 1,200,000 people as compared with the Peruvian capital's 160,000? Was the so-called monopolistic system of the Spanish and Portuguese colonial governments really so exclusive? Think what an interesting comparison could be drawn between the Guipuzcoan Company in Venezuela and the British East India Company and other great chartered companies. The history of slavery and of the slave trade in colonial South America is another fascinating topic. What became of the 20,000 negroes who were in Buenos Aires in 1810? How many of them, after slavery was abolished in 1813, perished in the crossing of the Andes in San Martin's negro regiments in January and February, 1817?

To come down to more modern times, interesting studies might be written on the development of shipping between South America and the rest of the world from the foundation of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company by a Massachusetts man, William Wheelwright, in 1840—or even from Capt. Uriah Bunker's voyage from Nantucket to Brazil in 1774—to the present time; or on the reasons why South America makes six-sevenths of her purchases from Europe, and only one-seventh from the United States, in this year 1912.

For those who continuously decry the absolutism of the Spanish colonial régime, a study of the various consulates or chambers of commerce that existed in the larger Spanish colonial cities will be interesting and profitable. What indirect influences did the one established at Buenos Aires in 1791 have on quickening the spirit of freedom and economic independence therein? That of Lima,

which existed from 1619 to 1821, deserves especial study. The ordinance of the Viceroy Prince of Esquilache, of December 20, 1619—not long after the first House of Burgesses had met at Jamestown, Va.—gave the “Consulate of the Merchants of this City of the Kings, of the Kingdoms and Provinces of Peru, Tierra Firma and Chile, and of those who may transact business therein with the Kingdoms of Spain and New Spain,” jurisdiction over all commercial matters and lawsuits between merchants, partners, brokers, and agents; in short, almost complete control of everything relating to commercial matters, including disputes over wages between masters of vessels and seamen. On the 2d of January of each year the “business men or merchants, married or widowers, over 25 years of age, with their own business houses, not being foreigners or lawyers,” were summoned to vote for the members of this consulate of commerce. This body had an important and recognized position wherever it was established. Its indirect control over the finances often caused it to exert much influence over the policy and actions of the viceroys or others in authority, and it must be regarded, viewed in the light of the times in which it existed, as a strictly representative body exercising a direct influence on the administration of the government of this important Spanish colony. Thus the Calle Mercadores in Lima, the Street of the Merchants, where these merchant-electors mostly lived, may be considered the cradle of representative institutions in South America.

E. ON THE ECONOMICS OF SLAVERY, 1815-1860.

Remarks in the Conference on American History, by U. B. PHILLIPS, University of Michigan.

In Prof. Dodd's paper, which all must agree is highly suggestive and admirable, I must, however, take issue with the assertion that slaves offered the most profitable investment for capital in the ante bellum South. If the statement were applied only to the periods when slave prices were very low, it might be unexceptionable; but when made sweepingly it may easily be refuted. The closing of the African slave-trade and the development of cotton production drove up the price of "prime field hands" from an average of about \$300 a head in 1790 to an average of from \$1,600 to \$1,800 in 1860, and simultaneously drove down the price of cotton from a range of 20 to 40 cents a pound about the beginning of the nineteenth century to a range of 10 to 12 cents in the decade of the fifties. The prices of both slaves and cotton fluctuated actively through the whole ante bellum time, and their fluctuations for brief periods were often parallel. But in the long run slave prices went up tremendously while cotton prices went down. Now the production of cotton was by far the chief employment of slave labor, and between 1820 and 1860 no great changes were made in the system of cotton culture nor, so far as one may judge, in the per capita output by the slaves employed in the industry. We are driven to the conclusion that in the later ante bellum decades slave prices were so high that the investment could be made to yield even a moderately good return only through the most efficient management and in the districts most favorable for the production of the plantation staples. As an index to the situation it may be observed that several railroad companies which bought slaves to constitute their track gangs in the thirties became convinced in the forties and fifties that hired labor was the cheaper, and with one accord sold off their slaves. The fluctuations of the slave market gave occasional opportunity for profitable speculation, but seldom—virtually never after the twenties—did slave labor in the United States permit industrial investment with large rates of profit.

On the general subject of the ante bellum period, a principal need in my opinion is the study of economic and social conditions district by district throughout the country, from all discoverable unconscious as well as conscious material, and the study of political policies

and campaigns as induced by these economic and social conditions. As between economic and social affairs, I think the former have recently received the greater attention, but the latter are in many connections the more important. In a recent work, for example, Prof. Dodd draws an analogy between the position of the pro-slavery men and that of present-day champions of the protective tariff, strictly on the ground of vested interests. He here neglects the principal factor in the situation. Whereas the North in general was considering only the institution of slavery, the South was confronted with the problem of racial adjustments as its paramount consideration. The two sections did not face the same issue, nor, so to say, did they speak the same language. Their arguments never met, but constantly glanced past one another. The historian who would give a sound exposition of the great issues must be critically cognizant of all the doctrines influential in the period of which he treats; he must view them all as phenomena and be dominated by no one of them. The subservience to the abolitionist tradition, for example, which has characterized most of the writing of American history to the present day, vitiates much that has been printed and necessitates new studies with broader interpretations.

It is probable that every important political group in American history has put forward as many false issues and arguments as it has true ones. Whether John Quincy Adams really thought that the "sacred right of petition" was endangered by the Atherton resolutions; whether the abolitionists believed that slaves in the South were driven to death for the greater profit of their masters, or that emancipation in the British West Indies did not prostrate industry; whether the pro-slavery leaders really thought that there was an economic need for the extension of slavery into California or Kansas; whether William L. Yancey in advocating the reopening of the African slave trade was prompted by a belief in its desirability and feasibility, or whether he merely raised the issue in order to produce a new sense of southern grievance and thereby strengthen the movement for southern independence—all these and many similar questions are interesting, and some of them vital. But most of them, and most of the vastly larger questions of sectional divergence and conflict, as well as many questions of nonsectional character, require for their understanding a knowledge of every sort of historical material bearing upon them, and require also a familiarity with the country to be gained only by travel and sojourn.

F. ON THE HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1815-1860.

Remarks in the Conference on American History, by P. ORMAN RAY, The Pennsylvania State College.

The history of Pennsylvania between 1815 and 1860 furnishes a number of profitable subjects for investigation. I would suggest (1) a careful study of Pennsylvania politics between 1815 and 1828. Such a study would cover the contest between Findlay and Hiester for the governorship, the bickerings and influence of the Irish editors, John Binns of the Democratic Press and William Duane of the Aurora; the beginnings of the convention system of nominations, the early movement for high protection and internal improvements, the decline of the commercial class and the rise of the manufacturing interests, and the growth of Jacksonian Democracy in Pennsylvania.

(2) While much has already been written on the economic history of Pennsylvania, much remains to be written, and to the ambitious student in this field of historical work I would especially commend the financial history of the State.

(3) The contest for free schools, culminating in the enactment of the school law of 1834 and the attempt to repeal it at the next session of the legislature, has been treated on its formal documentary side in Wickersham's "History of Education in Pennsylvania." It remains, however, for some one to correlate this great struggle with the contemporaneous political, economic, sectional, and denominational interests.

(4) To the list of biographies suggested by preceding speakers, I would add a life of Stephen Girard, the founder of Girard College and possibly the greatest financier of his day. There is said to be a vast amount of Girard's correspondence, now in the possession of the trustees of the Girard estate, which has not yet been drawn upon by any biographer.

(5) One of the most famous and important contests in the Pennsylvania Legislature occurred in 1845-46 over the right to construct a railroad from Philadelphia or Harrisburg to Pittsburgh. The contending parties were the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company and the company which soon became the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. The struggle between them is important not only as a phase of the rivalry between Philadelphia and Baltimore for the

trade of the West, but because it serves to suggest a profitable subject for investigation in the field of practical politics in other States as well as in Pennsylvania. Such a study might be entitled "Early Railroads and State Legislatures." The investigation should include not only an examination of the legislative proceedings which preceded and attended the granting of early railway franchises and the enactment of other legislation incidental to the construction and growth of railways, but should also include the connection of railway companies with local and State politics, particularly as related to the choice of members of the legislatures.

(6) In the period we are considering, a number of State constitutional conventions met. The proceedings of these conventions would furnish the basis for a series of profitable investigations. I would suggest an analysis of the debates and votes in the several conventions (*a*) upon the subject of the qualifications for voting and holding office, (*b*) upon the limitations to be placed upon the legislatures, and (*c*) upon the subjects of canals, railways, and banks.

(7) The movements for the abolition of imprisonment for debt and for an elective State judiciary seem to be suitable subjects for investigation; also, the agitation for and against the enactment of a prohibitory liquor law in the early fifties. From an extended examination of newspapers for these years in connection with work upon another subject, I was much impressed with the amount of space devoted to this phase of the temperance question at a time when the slavery question is commonly supposed to have been uppermost in politics. I am inclined to think that careful investigation would show that the liquor-law agitation was a factor in breaking down party lines in the North between 1850 and 1856, second in importance only to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The thorough treatment of this subject for the entire country would, it seems to me, be rather too large an undertaking for a single investigator. I would recommend a series of studies, each study limited to a small group of States.

(8) Finally, I would suggest a series of intensive studies in the different presidential campaigns occurring between 1815 and 1860. In view of what has already been done in his own seminary along this line, our chairman is in a better position than I to express an authoritative opinion regarding what may be accomplished in this field. I, for one, hope that the day is not far distant when we shall see the publication of a series of carefully prepared monographs covering all the presidential campaigns prior to 1861.

G. HISTORICAL RESEARCH IN THE FAR WEST.

Read in the Conference on American History, by KATHARINE COMAN, Wellesley College.

When by the Louisiana Purchase and the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo the United States Government trebled its territory, there were added to the national domain, not only vast resources—agricultural, mineral, and commercial—and area for the making of 22 States, but powerful social and political forces. The exploration, exploitation, and civilization of the Louisiana Territory summoned American citizens to deeds of courage, endurance, and self-sacrifice. The deeds of those men of the westward migration, Jedidiah Smith, Marcus Whitman, Gov. Robinson, and scores of other influential leaders have been duly chronicled. Conscious that they were working for posterity, many of these frontiersmen kept journals, some of them ill-spelled, scrappy, and often in error as to latitude and longitude, yet they give the essential facts. Timothy Flint first saw the importance of preserving these "human documents." Not content with recording his own experiences and observations along the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers, he edited and published the *Pattie Narrative*. Elliott Coues brought out an important series of journals, including those of Zebulon M. Pike, Lewis and Clark, Jacob Fowler, Charles Larpenteur, and J. W. Powell. But the historian of the Far West is above all indebted to Reuben G. Thwaites, 23 of whose 30 volumes of "Early Western Travels" present the journals of men who knew the land beyond the Mississippi. The several fur companies, too, did their part in writing history. The Missouri Fur Company, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, above all, Astor's creation, the American Fur Company, kept records and letter files that contain much of lasting import. These musty papers, together with personal letters and newspaper files from frontier towns, have been thoroughly searched by Maj. H. M. Chittenden, and his "History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West" affords firm treading for the student who would understand this pioneer industry.

Fortunately local patriotism has fostered the keeping of historical records. Hardly was a State organized and its political boundaries delimited, when a State historical association was formed. Notable among these local bodies are the Oregon Historical Association and the Oregon Pioneer Association, the latter having published a series of *Transactions* that covers 40 years and includes such papers as

Mrs. Whitman's Journal and the McLoughlin Document. The State historical associations of Washington, Missouri, Kansas, and Texas have achieved results hardly less significant. One might mention a score of individual historians, laymen, and professionals, whose labors in the western field have been zealous and fruitful. The Nestor of the chroniclers of the Far West is Hubert Howe Bancroft, president of the Pacific coast branch of the American Historical Association. The 35 volumes of his "History of the Pacific Coast States" constitute a mine of information on which all subsequent historians must rely for suggestion as to the course of events and direction as to sources.

The Bancroft Collection, now in the library of the University of California, is the most considerable private collection of books, manuscripts, and transcripts, notably the Vallejo papers, but the number of original documents at Santa Fé and the Latter Day Saints' Historian's Office at Salt Lake City is of no less significance. The public library of Los Angeles has gathered a large number of authenticated copies of the journals of Spanish explorers, but its most important original document is the report of the "Mercury" case, the only record of the proceedings of a Spanish court against Yankee smugglers represented in any American library. The State library at Sacramento has little to illustrate the Mexican period of California history, but for the American period its collection of files of newspapers and magazines, State documents, biographical sketches, etc., is unrivaled. The "Index of Economic Material" (1849-1904), compiled by Miss A. R. Hasse under the auspices of the Carnegie Institution, has rendered this material easy of access.

There is a vast amount of interesting data still extant, but in highly perishable form, e. g., in the memories of living men whose partial but vivid knowledge of events should be written down before it passes beyond our reach. The reminiscences of such men as J. J. Warner, Josiah Belden, J. B. Chiles, J. Minto, William Jennings, etc., are among the most important manuscripts in the Bancroft Collection. Equally in danger of destruction are the letters and family papers, business records, and book collections that remain in private hands subject to all the chances of fire and flood, neglect, and personal whim. Gov. Abernethy's papers, of much value to the historian, are still in private hands.

The San Francisco fire swept large collections, both public and private, into oblivion. The Public Library lost 140,000 volumes, including complete files of early newspapers, the California Star, the Californian, and Alta California. The European portion of the Sutro Library went up in smoke, but the Spanish-American material, largely manuscripts of Mexican origin, escaped. The Spanish archives, records, and land grants gathered from the missions and

presidios of Upper California were in charge of the United States surveyor and were housed in an inner room of the land office on Montgomery Street. The Library of Congress had made an unsuccessful effort to have these irreplaceable documents removed to Washington. There was sufficient delay in the burning of that section of San Francisco to have made possible the saving of the contents of the Land Office, but no one was at hand who seems to have felt responsible for the task. The loss was irreparable. There are considerable transcripts in the Bancroft Collection, but the authentic data for a history of land titles in California are lost. Another mass of undigested history destroyed in this conflagration was the records of the Alaska Commercial Company, successor to the Russian-American Fur Company. Another collection of even greater interest were the carefully kept records of the Wells-Fargo Express Company. For the 20 years during which mining was the leading industry of the far West, the Wells-Fargo was the *sine qua non* of success, since their pack trains furnished the only means of getting the gold or silver or copper to market. The history of this great company is replete with adventure, and was soon to have been written up, but flames swept away every vestige of the material. So that the early history of the Wells-Fargo Express Company can never be written.

Highly commendable is the zeal of the students of western history to utilize all material that remains and to discover its true meaning. Prof. Joseph Schafer, for example, spent a year rummaging through the Hudson's Bay Company's records in London and published some of the results in the *American Historical Review*—the correspondence of Sir George Simpson, a series of letters that must radically modify the previous interpretation put upon the policy of the Great Company toward American settlers in Oregon. The Hittells, Theodore H. and John S., have spent their lives on the history of California with admirable result. The Academy of Pacific Coast History has printed a series of scholarly translations of the journals of the Spanish explorers. The journals of Jedidiah Smith, the well-known fur trader, have been in good part recovered, and a biography based upon all available data is ready for the press. The Champlain Society of Canada is to publish the journals of David Thompson, pioneer geographer, who so clearly foresaw the political significance of the Columbia River to Great Britain.

The material is steadily accumulating, but the philosophical history of the Far West remains to be written. No one has undertaken to discover and adequately estimate the forces, social, political, and economic, that have transformed the materialistic and individualistic creed of these frontier communities into an organized demand for a better civilization than has obtained "back east."







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